

Egypt Raya says might bid for fixed-line license

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Raya Technology and Communication RAYA.CA in Egypt announced on Sunday that it is studying bidding for the second fixed-line license in the country through an alliance with an international operator

Raya was waiting for the announcement of the license conditions, said Mr. Medhat Khalil, the Company Chairman. He added that many elements will determine if we are really going to take that step, for example if the license will include international calls or not.

Khalil denied press reports that his company had already agreed to an alliance with British Telecom.

We are talking to several international players but we have not concluded any agreements yet, he said.

Meanwhile, in late June, Mr. Tarek Kamel the Minister of Communications in Egypt declared that Egypt would offer a license to operate a second fixed-line network during 2008, ending years of monopoly by state-dominated Telecom Egypt ETEL.CA.

Orascom Telecom ORTE.CA, Etisalat Egypt, a unit of UAE-based Emirates Telecommunications Corp. ETEL.AD and the Egyptian Post have all said they would bid for the license.

The second fixed-line network, which would compete with that of Telecom Egypt, would start operating in early 2009.

Raya, which operates in the mobile phone distribution, IT services and call centers businesses, posted a 13 percent rise in net profit in the first nine months of 2007 to 75.2 million Egyptian pounds.

Shares in the firm were 0.2 percent up at 13.25 pounds by 0949 GMT.